

## Virginia Latino Advisory Board

Friday, August 26, 2022

12:00-5:00pm

Virginia Tech Undergraduate Admissions Office

925 Prices Fork Road, Blacksburg, VA 24061



VIRGINIA  
**LATINO**  
**ADVISORY**  
BOARD

### Meeting Minutes

#### Attendance

Avendano	Jonathan		Guzmán	C. Alexander		Revilla	Emilio
Berry	Paul		Kelly	Jennifer		Sanchezconcha	Lyons
Chase	Jo-Ann		Kline-Gabel	Karina		Soto	Rodrigo
Clavijo	Wendy**		Medina	Yahusef		Vega	Juan
De Silva	Joshua		Metzger	Ana		Watkins	Walewska**
Espinoza	Juan		Patterson	Diana		Williams	Cecilia
Gamez	Astrid		Rimola	Sergio		Zelaya	Eduardo

*\*\*attended remotely via WebEx*

*Administration's staff present: Suzanne Holland, Board Administrator,*

#### **12:00 pm. - Committee Breakout Sessions - Committee Chairs**

Business, Civic Engagement & Social Justice, Education & Workforce, Health, and Housing

#### **1:00 pm. Welcome, Call Meeting to Order, Meeting Overview - Lyons Sanchezconcha**

Greetings to guests, time to go around the room for all present to introduce themselves

#### **1:05 pm. May/June Meeting Minutes Approval, August Meeting Agenda Adoption -**

Approval of Minutes May 2022:

Board member, Karina Kline-Gabel, made a motion to approve, seconded by board member, Waleska Watkins.

Motion approved. Vote: All in Favor = 18, Opposed = 0

Approval of Minutes from June 2022:

Board member, Diana Patterson, made a motion to approve, seconded by board member, Paul Barry. Motion

approved. Vote: All in Favor = 18, Opposed = 0

Approval of Agenda August 2022:

Board member, Joann Chase, made a motion to approve, seconded by board member, Sergio Rimola. Board Chair, Lyons Sanchezconcha, will remove two presentations from the agenda, the Administrative Update and the

Listening Session Recap, due to board members not in attendance.

Motion approved. Vote: All in Favor = 18, Opposed = 0

### **1:10 pm. Public Comment -**

Sam Florer from the VA Museum of History and Culture introduced a new program that provides naturalization classes for potential new citizens. These free classes will begin Wed Oct 26 - Dec 14 - every Wed 6:30pm-8:00pm.

Exree Hip from Virginia Tech expressed interest in the work of VLAB and welcomed the group

Dr. Rebecca Vargas-Jackson: works in health care equity issues in northern Virginia and joined to thank VLAB for being the voice for the Latino constituency.

### **2:00 p.m. Guest Speakers - Dr. Sergio Barrera, Associate Professor, Department of Economics at Virginia Tech**

Joined us to address the benefits and costs of raising the Virginia minimum wage, an important topic that has the benefit for workers and the Hispanic community, which has one of the highest share of minimum wage workers in the country. [PPT linked here.](#)

Board member, Diana Patterson, asked about cancellation of increase based on prices increasing for all

- more redistributive
- although prices may increase, we can meet that if the wages are good for more of the public

Paul Berry asked about how businesses can stay in business with the hiring of the minimum wage

- for the workers, inflation kills business (especially if there is no minimum wage increase)
- minimum wage is more localized and doesn't have the broader inflation effect
- short term may be harder but in the long term workforce has more spending power

Alex Guzman thanked the speaker for highlighting the probable effects on the workers without the minimum wage increase and asked about the strategies to expand and protect small business while ensuring workers have better wages

-there is a large disparity between sizes of firms which is why policy subsidies/benefits should be tied to firm size to

Board member, Cecilia Williams, commented on the different wage raise hikes as an incentive over the years and asked about the history of Virginia's wage

- every state has different constituencies and political power that can affect whether these policies get passed and highlighted the importance of VLAB as an important advocate to ensure a vote for these communities

Diana Patterson asked for more explanation on how micro businesses will be affected.

Jennifer Kelly addressed the inequality for Latino small businesses

- in the long run the employer relies on people, like their workers, to bring them business
- with better access to good paying jobs community members can potentially buy more with higher a raise in minimum wage
- if more profits go in the hands of shareholders and investors, they are not necessarily going to put the

money in the economy, whereas the workers will spend money on services that move the economy.

## **2:40pm Gabriela Vazquez, Program Administrator for the Department of Housing and Community Development**

Presented the pilot of the Virginia Eviction Reduction Project (VERP) at VHC. This program has been most helpful for those who need short-term rental assistance (less than six months) but have not yet reached the eviction stage. Ms. Vazquez is open to partnership with VLAB since only 3% of those being served are Hispanic/Latino.

[PPT linked here.](#)

Board member, Jo-Ann Chase, asked about why there are only 3% of Hispanics are participants

- most likely it's not because they don't have the need, but because the language access seems to be the dominant barrier

Board member, Rodrigo Soto, also commented on how best to partner with VERP and encouraged Ms. Vazquez to connect with board member, Waleska Watkins.

Board member, Waleska Watkins, expressed gratitude for the presentation and Ms. Vasquez's presentation and also mentioned that it's very important to include attorneys in these processes when it breaches the eviction stage.

Board member, Alex Guzmán, added that sometimes these organizations may not be equipped to do the outreach necessary and suggested partnerships be forged for that gap in outreach and support.

## **3:10pm Listening Session Recap**

Diana Patterson mentioned that she observed services that work in silos, instead of working together with systems in place, are not as efficient. Application fees for housing were also an issue that was discussed.

Cecilia Williams added that the attendees were very grateful to be heard and she encouraged VLAB to invite elected officials to share more information with constituents.

Lyons Sanchezconcha responded that there can't be impartiality if we invite elected officials and should be more centered on communicating with VLAB

Astrid Gamez suggested that Attorney General, Jason Miyares, be considered to participate in a future listening session. Could there be an organization or leader community as contacts for VLAB

Alex Guzman added that safe affordable quality housing is an issue that must be at the forefront.

Sergio Rimola suggested that we invite different folks from organizations that will be helpful at future listening sessions.

Rodrigo Soto noted that some had issues with access to the DMV - such an issue could be addressed if some agency representatives could be present

## **3:25 pm Break - Lyons Sanchezconcha**

### **3:35 pm Administrative Update - Suzanne Holland**

Board administrator, Ms. Holland, expressed regret for not being able to be with VLAB and welcome new members in person and congratulated the board for getting together and thanked our host board member, Juan Espinoza.

- Submit travel reimbursements for payments
- Virtual meetings/FOIA guidance - new guidelines are in place since the emergency order ended in June 2022 - every other meeting could be virtual (applied to board and committee meetings) 2 per year or 25% of meetings.
- Mr. Justin Bell is working on a guide for boards with FOIA policy guidelines
- New members received orientation and our board has the most new members of all
- VLAB membership will continue to evolve over the next four years
  - Board member, Emilo Revilla, asked if materials will be distributed if new board members didn't make the orientation
- Annual report and meeting with Governor & Cabinet format will look different than in the past
- Timeline for report to the Governor
  - October-January: Brainstorming; focus-issue identification
  - January - April: Info/data gathering (committee meetings)
  - May-July: Draft/compile Annual Report
  - August - September: Submit Report to Board Liaison to begin sharing with Cabinet/Staff (present phase)
- Governor's administrative priorities: aspirations, action, results over four years
  - reflect everything through the Governor's priorities and verbalize how recommendations will do so
    - Cutting Costs for Virginians dn Reducing Regulatory Burdens
    - Restoring Excellence in Education
    - Keeping our Communities Safe
    - Reinvigorating Job Growth and Making Government Work for Virginians

[Slides linked here.](#)

### **3:55 pm Chair's Report - Lyons Sanchezconcha**

Board Chair, Lyons Sanchezconcha, spoke about the two major needs in our communities: representation in the state and access

### **4:05 pm Approve Report - Lyons Sanchezconcha**

Board Chair, Lyons Sanchezconcha, made a motion to approve the report, pages 1-16 and 40. Board member, Rodrigo Soto seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **Civic Engagement & Social Justice**

- Board member, Rodrigo Soto, presented recommendations
  - Rodrigo made a motion to accept the recommendations, Lyons seconded the motion. Discussion of the board followed.
    - motion to strike the first recommendation (codifying Maribel's position)

- Motion passed unanimously

#### Business & Workforce Committee

- Diana presented on recommendations,
  - will be tabling the recommendation on wage increases for next year based on today's presentation and the need for more discussion and time to disseminate the information
    - Rodrigo Soto shared a proposed amendment regarding the minimum wage increase, Waleska Watkins seconded the motion. Verbal vote. Motion passed.
      - Aye: Jonathan, Paul, Juan E., Alex, Karina, Yahusef, Sergio, Rodrigo, Walewska, Cecilia
      - Nay: Astrid, Jennifer, Ana, Diana, Lyons, Emilio, Juan V.
      - Abstain: Jo-Ann
    - Juan Vega shared that we need more time to examine some of these issues for next year
    - Approving the business committee recommendations. Motion passed
      - Aye: Jonathan, Paul, Jo-Ann, Juan E., Alex, Karina, Yahusef, Ana, Sergio, Lyons, Rodrigo, Walewska, Cecilia, Juan V.
      - Nay: Astrid, Jennifer, Emilio, Diana

#### Education & Career Training Committee

- Board member, Yahusef Medina reported on recommendations
- Edits in wording for pg.16 recommendation title
  - Motion made by committee chair, second Alex Guzman
    - Question by Jo-Anne Chaste regarding content

#### Health Committee

- Sergio Rimola, committee chair reported on recommendations
  - Juan Vega made a motion to approve and Rodrigo seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

#### Housing Committee

- Waleska Watkins reported on recommendations
  - Lyons Sanchezconcha made a motion to approve and Karina Kline-Gabel seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **5:10 pm Board Discussion and New Business- Lyons Sanchezconcha**

Tabled due to time constraint

### **5:11 pm Closing Remarks & Announcements - Lyons Sanchezconcha**

**Meeting Adjourned: 5:12pm**